

REMARKS

Claims 1-17, 22-38, 42-44, 47, 48, 50-52, 55, 56 and 61 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 5, 10, 22, 26 and 31 are amended to incorporate allowable subject matter. Moreover, allowable claims 47 and 55 are amended into independent form and claims 42-44 and 50-52 are amended for clarification only. Finally, claims 18-21, 39, 40, 57-60 and 62-69 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

It is gratefully appreciated that the Office Action indicates that claims 47, 48, 55 and 56 contain allowable subject matter.

The Office Action indicates that the provisional applications (U.S. Application Nos. 60/188,562 and 60/188,580) upon which priority is claimed, both fail to provide adequate support under 35 U.S.C. §112 for claims 1-17, 22-38, 41-56 and 61 of the present application. Thus, the Office Action asserts that the effective U.S. filing date for the present application is believed to be March 9, 2001.

However, it is respectfully submitted that adequate support exists for the claims in the provisional applications. For example, U.S. Application No. 60/188,562 clearly discloses in claim 1 that a smart camera system includes "actuator outputs controlled by said digital signal process to control optical elements of said image sensor." Furthermore, Fig. 1 of U.S. Application No. 60/188,562 corresponds to Fig. 1 in the present application and clearly shows at least two actuators 109 connected to control modules 112 and to a host computer 116. Thus, adequate support in at least U.S. Application No. 60/188,562 exists for claims 1-17, 22-38, 41-56 and 61 of the present application. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Patent Office grant the priority filing date of March 10, 2000 for the present application.

The Office Action objects to the specification asserting that the specification does not adequately set forth the claim invention claimed in claims 1-17, 22-38, 41-56 and 61.

However, as explained above, Fig. 1 of the present application clearly shows these features described in paragraph 6 of the Office Action. Moreover, page 11 of the present application discloses, for example, that "[e]ach function device shown in Fig. 2 of the present application is distinctly configured to execute functions specific to the particular control module 112 to which it is coupled. The combination of the common communications device 200 with a unique function device 204 constitutes a control module 112 that can perform a variety of functions." Accordingly, the present application adequately sets forth the claimed invention of claims 1-17, 22-38, 41-56 and 61 to include the features of paragraph 6 of the Office Action. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

The Office Action objects to claim 2 because of an informality. Claim 2 is amended to correct the informality. Thus, it is requested that the objection to claim 2 be withdrawn.

The Office Action objects to claims 43 and 51. However, it is respectfully submitted that no amendments are required to clarify claims 43 and 51. For example, although the "issuance of a read request to the smart camera module at fixed time intervals" may be controlled by a processor using a real-time clock, Applicants are not required to claim the actual processor in claims 43 and 51 because claims 43 and 51 are method claims. Moreover, claims 43 and 51 distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention by reciting that the issuance of the read request occurs when a particular time exists on the real-time clock. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 43 and 51 be withdrawn.

The Office Action objects to claims 45 and 53 because of informalities. Claims 45 and 53 are amended to correct the informalities. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 45 and 53 be withdrawn.

The Office Action objects to the drawings. Corrected drawings are submitted with this Amendment. Thus, it is requested that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-17, 22-38, 41-45, 49-53 and 61 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Watanabe (U.S. Patent No. 6,498,598) and DeCarlo (U.S. Patent No. 5,903,662); and claims 46 and 54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Watanabe and further in view of Kawakami (U.S. Patent No. 5,535,208). Claims 41, 45, 46, 49, 53 and 54 are canceled. Thus, the rejections of these claims are moot.

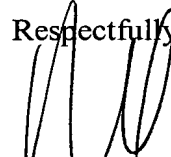
Moreover, allowable claims 47 and 55 are amended into independent form. Thus, these claims are in condition for allowance. Furthermore, claims 42-44 and 50-52 are amended to depend from the allowable independent claims. Thus, these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Finally, claims 1, 5, 10, 22, 26 and 31 are amended to incorporate allowable subject matter. Thus, claims 1-17, and 22-38 are also in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Replacement Sheets

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